

News Release

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The White Creek Fire is Burning on the Bridger-Teton National Forest

Alpine, Wyo., July 16, 2016 – The White Creek fire continues to burn on the Greys River Ranger District of the Bridger-Teton National Forests. The fire is a little larger than 3 and a half acres in size and is burning approximately four miles south of the Deer Creek Guard Station on the Greys River Road in Alpine, Wyoming.

The fire is burning in shrubs, dead and fallen logs, and in stands of mixed conifer trees. A few trees are torching, which means the entire tree burns like a matchstick would, with flames in the upper part of the single tree.

There is a hand crew of 24 firefighters working on the fire. They are using shovels, McLeod rakes, and Pulaski's to flank the fire with a line of dirt that they scratch into the surface, free of burnable material, to help contain the fire. A helicopter is staying with the firefighters and is dropping buckets of water on the fire and bringing supplies to the fire area.

The firefighters have this fire 20% contained. "The Bridger-Teton does not manage all wildfires the same way," said Deputy Forest Supervisor Jose Castro. "Our response can range from monitoring a fire that is beneficial to an ecosystem to aggressively putting out a fire that threatens people or resources they need," he said.

Fire had historically been suppressed in National Forests, and the artificial buildup of vegetation proved to be unhealthy for the environment after many years. "Restoring ecosystems includes thinning crowded forests and using prescribed fire, which can help prevent the buildup of flammable vegetation that feeds extreme fires," said Castro. "In certain locations, when conditions are right, we will use natural wildfire to reduce fuels and restore ecosystems that benefit from fire." "In this case, because of several factors we decided to suppress this fire, but it is certainly an area we will use naturally ignited fires in the future, to improve forage for wildlife and restore a healthy ecosystem," he said.

There are no road closures associated with this fire. The public is asked to drive slowly along the Greys River Road while visiting the Bridger-Teton National Forest. "The dust alone impedes the view of drivers along this gravel road, but the excessive speeds and taking turns so fast" We have a lot of extra people and large trucks and equipment using that road, especially now with this fire," he said. "I can't emphasize enough the importance of slowing down and driving safely," Castro said.

To report a fire or smoke in Bridger-Teton National Forest, call the Teton Interagency Fire Dispatch Center at [307.739.3630](tel:3077393630). For more fire information, please visit www.tetonfires.com.

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